

225 18. No 1
JUSTICE and MERCY equal Sup-
porters of the Throne; Or, The Duty
of the Magistrate to employ his Sword
against the Stubborn and Rebellious.

In Vindication of his MAJESTY's most
Excellent Administration from the unrea-
sonable Clamours of unruly and seditious
Men, for some seasonable Instances of
Justice exercis'd on the Rebels.

A
SERMON

Preach'd in the
Church of St. Mary Rotherbith,
BEING THE
ANNIVERSARY of his MAJESTY's
happy Accession to the Throne.

By EDWARD LOVELL, M. A.
Rector of the said Parish.

Publish'd at the earnest Request of several Gentlemen
of the Parish.

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The first of these is the fact that the
 Government has been unable to secure
 the necessary funds to carry out its
 policy of non-interference in the
 internal affairs of the country.

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TO THE
READER.



I being a Duty incumbent on those of our Profession to apply all possible Remedies to our present Distractions, I thought I could not better support my Character on a Day we were met to celebrate the happy Accession of our Sovereign to the Throne, than by helping to remove One Popular Prejudice lately taken up against the Government, which is loudly now complain'd of, as Sanguinary and Cruel, for the necessary Execution of the Laws against some of the blackest Malefactors. To vindicate His Majesty and faithful Ministry from so severe and unjust a Charge, I first compos'd this Discourse

To the Reader.

course as an Antidote only to preserve the People under my Care from the prevailing Infection. This was all I had then in view, but the honest Zeal of several worthy Gentlemen and eminent Loyalists in my Parish has over-rul'd my first Intention, and prevail'd for its Publication, in hopes of a more extensive Good. The prospect of this, joyn'd with the remembrance of some Service I have had the pleasure of bearing from several Parts, my late Discourse Against the Indefeizibleness of Hereditary Right has been able to do, quickly determin'd me to make another Attempt, in hopes of meeting with the same Success, in making some more of our deluded Countrymen at once Converts to His Most Excellent Majesty King GEORGE, and their own truest Interest. That God would prosper my pious Intention to this great and most desirable End, is the hearty Prayer of

Thy most faithful Friend
and Well-wisher,

E. L.



ROM. xiii. 3, 4; 5.

*Rulers are not a Terror to good Works,
but to the Evil. Wilt thou then not
be afraid of the Power? Do that
which is good, and thou shalt have
Praise of the same.*

*For he is the Minister of God to thee for
Good. But if thou do that which is
Evil, be afraid; for he beareth not
the Sword in vain: for he is the Mi-
nister of God, a Revenger to execute
Wrath upon him that doth Evil.*

*Wherefore ye must needs be subject,
not only for Wrath, but also for Con-
science sake.*



THE peaceable Accession of
our Sovereign to the Throne
being so Publick and Nati-
onal a Blessing, wherein all
the Members of the Body
Politick either have or may possess a
Share;

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Share, it might well be suppos'd to engage us all in one common Harmony of Praise to that Almighty Guardian, who is the Author of Peace and Order in the World, whose Providence watches over Kingdoms and States, and who by holding the Reins of Government in his Hand, preserves them from sinking into Anarchy and Confusion.

Yet so unhappy are our Days, notwithstanding the common Blessings we derive from God by this Share of his inspecting Providence, that we find now a Schism in the Church about it, and new Doubts to arise about the Lawfulness of the Duty, which was constantly practis'd in the first and purest Ages of the Church, and which the Apostle has in such plain and expresse Terms decreed in our Favour, *1 Tim. ii. 1, 2.*

But it is objected by some of our more modest Adversaries, that to Praise God for a new Sovereign on this Day, is to rejoice at the Death of his Royal Predecessor; whose Piety and Good Works, they tell us, have so endear'd her Memory, as not to allow the least Sparklings of Joy to intermix with the mournful Remembrance of her Death.

But

But what a strange and ill-natur'd way of Reasoning is this? Where do we offer up any Thanksgiving to God, for taking her away? Or how do we lessen any part of her Vertues, by thanking God for bestowing on our Nation, a Glorious Successor to possess that Throne she could hold no longer?

Did the Praises of this Day confine her to the Grave, and hinder her Return to Earth again, or were our Office loaded with Calumny and Reproach, there might be some Pretence for Complaints of this kind; but none sure can think it unreasonable to bless God for renewing his Mercies, for not leaving us in Disorder and Confusion, but bestowing other Blessings in lieu of that he was pleas'd to take away, and which it was not in our Power to enjoy longer.

Let us then hush all ungrateful Murmurs, and not so much as whisper the least peevish Resentment, at a Time we are met to Praise God for one of the greatest Blessings any Nation is capable of possessing; for his filling the Throne with a Prince of such consummate Wisdom, Justice and Equity; whose bright and uncommon Vertues add a Lustre to his Crown, reflect an Honour upon our Nation,

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tion, and could not fail to confer equal Measures of Happiness on us all, did not our Rebellion, Perjury, and most black Ingratitude to God and our Prince, obstruct the Blessing.

Having thus clear'd up the way to my Text, which could never hope for Access to the Mind that comes arm'd with Prejudice to this Day's Solemnity, I come now to consider the Words in the Sense and Method they naturally present us.

Wherein I shall,
First, Shew the great Advantages which any People or Nation enjoy from an Establish'd Government under Magistrates and Rulers, *Who are a Terror only to evil and not to good Works.*

Secondly, The Obligation they are under, of Exercising the Sword against all Contemners of the Establish'd Laws. *If thou do that which is Evil be afraid, says the Apostle, for he beareth not the Sword in vain; for he is the Minister of God, a Revenger to execute Wrath upon him that doth Evil.*

Thirdly, The Ways and Means whereby to escape the Sword and vindictive Power of the Magistrate: *Do that which*

& Good, and thou shalt have Praise of the same.

Fourthly and lastly, We may observe the Obligation which lies on the Conscience to obey his just Commands: We must needs be subject to this Magistrate, who is the Minister of God, not only for Wrath, on the account of avoiding some temporal Evil, but also for Conscience sake, out of Duty to God, who has plac'd him over us.

First, I am to shew the great Advantages which any People or Nation enjoy from an Establish'd Government under Magistrates and Rulers, who are a Terror only to Evil, and not to Good Works.

Civil Government is so essential to the Happiness of any People, that it is impossible for a Nation to subsist without it. Where there is no Law there can be no Order or publick Peace, no Boundaries of Right, no Security for Religion, no Fence for Property, or Guard for our Persons. In such a loose and unguarded State of Nature, Strength only and Violence, Stratagem and Fraud, would be the grand Arbiters of Justice; Right must then all be measur'd only by the longest

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longest Sword, and he must always preside over this Race of human Monsters, who had most of the Fox, Wolf or Tyger in his Frame and Composition.

These are the Mischiefs which would naturally flow from such a wild and disorder'd State; to avoid which, Men have been directed by the Laws of Nature and the Dictates of the purest Reason, to associate themselves for their mutual Preservation and Defence; to subject themselves to Rulers and Governors, to bind themselves by Laws to preserve the Publick Peace which they found so necessary for their common Safety, to repel Invaders, and secure a quiet Possession of their Lives and Fortunes, their Liberties and Estates.

And so far have all Mankind gone into these Measures, that there is no Place or Society of Men to be found without some Regulations; which makes Civil Government justly pass for a Divine Institution, as an Order set up and dictated by God himself, without which Mens brutal and savage Natures would quickly prey upon one another, and overthrow the very Ends and Purposes of the Creation; which was not only to propagate their own Species, but to extend God's
Glory,

Glory, and celebrate his Praise by a Course of devout Graces and relative Duties; which can never be practis'd without a religious Observance of Peace and Order, and a quiet Subjection to that Government which his Providence has establish'd in different Nations: So that whatever may be objected against any particular Form of Government, as wanting a Divine Original, it cannot be pretended but that Peace and Order, or Government in general, has God for its Author and Founder; and that therefore we cannot violate the Establish'd Laws of any Country, without violating at the same Time the Laws of the Almighty, who forbids Rebellion, Tumult, and Sedition, under the highest Penalty, and denounces Damnation against the Disturbers of the Publick Peace, and the Order establish'd in every Country, *Rom. xiii. 1, 2.*

Nor shall we think this Sanction too severe, if we calmly review the dismal Scenes of a Civil War, and what innumerable Mischiefs attend that Nation whose Government is once uphing'd. Murder, Rape, Fire, Waste, and Desolation, all lie at the Charge of the Rebellious Man; who by that Act of Treason, draws

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draws down a Legion or Torrent of Sins upon his own Head. Shall we wonder then at God's severest Threatnings and Denunciations against a Crime attended with this black Retinue and odious Train of Impieties, or that he should treat it like *Witchcraft*, to which the Scriptures compare it, which is a Compact with the Devil, when the Rebellious Man acts the very worst part of that accursed Fiend, and perpetrates Villanies equal even to the most accomplish'd Malice of Hell it self. For what Souls does not Rebellion make Havock of, as well as Bodies and Estates? What sudden and hasty Deaths does it often occasion to an unthinking Neighbourhood? Too many of whom it may be justly feared, have not been able, under that Surprise, to put themselves in a fit Posture to meet their Lord.

What need I mention, after this, the miserable State of others who are left to survive the Fate of their Friends, such whom the Rebels Sword has made Widows and Orphans, and expos'd to all the Scorns of an injurious and ill-natur'd World. Could we hear but all their Cries and Complaints, join'd with the mournful Howlings of many lost and distracted Souls, whose Repentance has
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been cut off by their cruel and untimely Hand, we shou'd not think Rebellion so light a Crime as our mad Times are apt to account it ; nor dare to charge our Rulers with Cruelty and Injustice, for revenging the Cause of an injur'd Country on the very Worst of Criminals, who attempted to lay their Church and Nation all in Ashes.

But this Consideration falls under my next Head, which was to shew,

Secondly, The Obligation which Rulers are under, of employing the Sword against such as are Contemners of the Establish'd Laws.

And this indeed is a necessary Consequence from my former Proposition ; for if Civil Government in general be necessary, as I have shewn it to be, and yet cannot be maintain'd without the seasonable Exercise of Authority, then it follows of Course that Offenders against the Law must be punish'd, or all Government must fall and be dissolv'd. 'Tis on this Foundation the Force of the Apostle's Argument in my Text is built ; *If thou do that which is Evil, says he, be afraid, for he beareth not the Sword in vain ; for he is the Minister*

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ster of God, a Revenger to execute Wrath upon him that doth Evil.

Here we may observe two Reasons assign'd for strict Justice and Severity in the Magistrate. One arises from the Duty incumbent on his Office to preserve Peace, *He beareth not the Sword in vain*; which yet he wou'd do, did he suffer Delinquents to range Abroad with Impunity; the other is drawn from the Relation he bears to God *whose Minister he is*, and to whom he is accountable for the Ruin and Misfortunes of his People, if he does not seasonably interpose Justice to cut off the presumptuous Sinner, and prevent the Growth of Evils to a State, by *executing timely Wrath upon him that doth Evil.*

These Considerations, I hope, may help to abate the fierce and untimely Rage of those who have taken up unreasonable Quarrels at our most Gracious Sovereign, for the necessary Severities he has been forc'd to use against the Enemies of their Country; as if it were a Crime in him to exercise Authority in Defence of the People committed to his Charge, for the Support of our Church, to maintain the Dignity of our Laws and Constitution, and secure

cure to ourselves and Posterity whatever is valuable to us in this World, or that has Relation to a Better.

Think only, had the Work of Treason prosper'd in the late Rebels Hands, how quickly had our pure Church been devour'd by those Flames they had kindled, and all Right and Property been ravish'd from us, unless we cou'd have barter'd Conscience for Estate, and sold the Reversion of Heaven for a present Possession upon Earth.

This was Part of the dismal Tragedy they intended, and is it not fit Inquisition shou'd be made after the Projectors of this bloody Scheme? Must our King be loaded with Calumny and Reproach for Protecting his own Subjects from future Attempts by a few seasonable Instances of Justice on some unrelenting Malefactors? *He is the Minister of God* we find for this very End, *to execute Wrath upon him that doth Evil*; and where can this Wrath be executed, if not on the Actors of Rebellion, which is the highest Treason and most complicated Mischief, which human Nature here is capable of committing?

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Yet notwithstanding the malignant Nature of this Crime, and tho' our King has been since treated with an unusual Insolence by the same wicked Set of Men, who are daily Persecuting him and his Royal House with the most impudent Libels and Invectives, by Men *who glory in their Shame* and traiterous Principles, and wear Badges of Rebellion on Purpose to be distinguish'd as Enemies of our Constitution; I say notwithstanding this barbarous and unnatural Treatment, enough to exasperate any Temper not possess'd with his Share of Meekness, yet we do not find his Royal Mind so intent on Justice, as to exclude a just Regard to Mercy, which even under all these Provocations we may observe still to have much the greater Ascendant in his Breast.

Those who have the Honour to be near his Person do all pronounce him a Prince made up of Lenity and Gentleness; he wounds himself with every Act of punitive Justice he is forc'd to exercise, and grieves to find he cannot display that Part of his Temper which is most agreeable and natural to him without Injury to the Nation.

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Mercy 'tis true is a most charming and attractive Virtue; 'tis that which most resembles us to God himself, who delights most in this Attribute; but yet the Perverseness of Men we find over-rules even all the Tenderness and Compassion of the divine Nature, which is often forc'd to shew itself in Terror and Flames.

We must sometimes resist the softest Inclinations of our Nature, when Indulgence only serves to feed the Pride and Insolence of others. In Cases of a publick Nature, the Temper shou'd be always fit, and Object worthy to receive the Favour. Tho' Humanity is the greatest Ornament of our Nature, and nothing can be thought of more Brave and Generous than to forgive, yet even this amiable Virtue may degenerate, and sink into Baseness and Pusillanimity, shou'd it yield to all Intreaties, and make no Distinction in the Quality of Crimes, and Nature of Addresses.

Justice has a necessary Share in Civil Society, without which the Nerves of Government wou'd soon relax and be dissolv'd, and the most Lewd and Dissolute become our Rulers. That Prince therefore

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fore who knows not as well to punish as forgive, would have but a very imperfect and defective Character, wou'd be very unfaithful to his Trust, be neither able long to secure his own Throne, nor the Happiness of the People he has sworn to Protect. There may be Mercies which are Cruel. A Compassion extended to some private Persons at the Expence and Hazard of the publick Peace, deserves more the Appellation of Cruelty than Pity, shou'd the Welfare of a Nation be risqu'd only in Favour to a private Indulgence. If we apply this to the present Times, we may observe from the harden'd Spirit the late Rebels dy'd in, how insecure their Lives had render'd ours, that there was the highest Reason for the Treatment they met with, that to Pardon them had been Cruelty to the Nation, that they wou'd never have ceas'd to labour our Destruction, and that they were justly therefore selected for an exemplary Punishment for their advanc'd and heighten'd Impieties.

I have enlarg'd the most on this Head in Justice as well as Compassion to our Prince, whose tenderest Nature, as well as most just and equal Administration, has

has not been able to screen him from the invenom'd Tongues of a most ungrateful People. If he's inclin'd to spare and shew Mercy, then says Detraction he dare not Strike; and when he executes Justice tho' never so necessary, then is he by the same rude Herd of Men loudly tax'd with Cruelty. Thus are even his Virtues traduc'd, and made subservient to the Designs of our common Enemies, *who are lurking all this Time in the Grass*, to leap and seize on us and our Inheritance, when we are sufficiently divided, and have worried one another with Obloquy and Reproach.

It wou'd soon cure all this unnatural Heat and Itch of Contention, wou'd Men learn to keep within their own Sphere, *and study to be quiet and mind their own Business*. The Study of themselves wou'd soon find 'em Work enough, without ingaging in the Cabinets of State, which is a Mystery beyond the vulgar Reach, that serves only to dazzle and confound their Sight.

The Defects they wou'd quickly discover upon this Search and Enquiry into themselves, cou'd not fail to have
some

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some useful and very valuable Effects, to inspire 'em with Humility and Meekness, and Peaceableness to those who have the Rule over 'em. By this Means they wou'd soon discover the Vileness of going about from House to House, as Tatlers also and busy Bodies, aspersing their Governours, and libelling a most wise and faithful Ministry; and be convine'd that to be good Christians and good Churchmen are quite different Things from talking loudly about them; and that they must be peaceable, meek, humble, lowly in Spirit, strict Observers of Truth, declar'd Enemies to all Falshood and Lyes, to all Calumny and Slander, to Tumults Riots and Seditions, before they can have a Right to that venerable Character. And as it ought to be our chief Concern to entitle ourselves to the Blessings that flow from a true and sincere Profession of the Gospel, so are we oblig'd strictly to examine our Lives by its Rules, and banish all Seeds of Rancour, all Remains of that *Pride from whence comes most of our Contention*, with that Evil Spirit of Lying which flies so much abroad: And if any amongst you have been so

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unfortunate to seduce any from their Allegiance by the Perswasions of Interest, by Fallshood or Mistake, earnestly to implore God's Pardon for such Mis-carriages, to help to reduce those you have led astray, and atone for all such Injuries to God, your Prince and your Nation by more fervent Instances of Zeal and Loyalty for the Future. Thus will you effectually secure the Protection of the Magistrate, with all that Praise, and Honour, and Happiness which is the sure Reward of such a peaceable and dutiful Behaviour.

But this falls under my next Consideration, which was to shew

Thirdly, The Way and Means whereby we may escape the vindictive Power of the Magistrate; do that which is Good and thou shalt have Praise of the same.

And what a Blessing is this to be under the Protection of such a Power, as is only arm'd against Injustice; that protects the Innocent, and never draws the Sword but against the Aggressor. And this indeed is the proper Office of every Magistrate, who degenerates into a Tyrant, and looses his Character,
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whenever he ceases to be the Guardian of the Peoples Rights, and to make the Law the Rule of his Government. The Miseries of this State we may easily discern in some Neighbouring Countries, where the Will of the Prince having triumph'd over the national Laws and original Constitution, the poor Subject has nothing belonging to him but Chains and Vassalage, the dismal Impress of Arbitrary Rule, that has scarce left the miserable People the bare Power of complaining.

How happy then are we that are yet permitted to breath the sweet Perfumes of Liberty, those delightful Odours for which all about us do in vain Pant ; that are bless'd with a Sovereign who is a most faithful Guardian of our Liberties ; who is good from Principle, and restrain'd more by Conscience than Law, from oppressing any. Under so mild a Sway Rebellion is of a more flagrant Nature. In some Cases, *Nature may be provok'd to rebel against Principle*, and Grace may be over-match'd by long Oppressions. In some pressing Circumstances, under the Weight of unjust Chains and barbarous Usage of cruel Bondage, Publick and National Injustice and Wrongs, Men may be

be tempted to purchase Freedom at the Expence of some Virtue; but where the Law lies as it does with us a *Sacred Depositum*, where the King himself is guided by those very Laws which govern the Subject; where Property is secur'd, our Religious and Civil Rights confirm'd, and every Man at Liberty to enjoy himself peaceably *under his own Vine, and under his own Fig-Tree*; in such a Case, to *lift up the Hand against the Lord's Anointed*, is a piece of Treason that wants a Name, and deserves no Pity.

Yet is not this too much the Case of our poor deluded Nation, who have been Rebellious meerly from a Principle of Wickedness without the least Provocation, who are as full of Complaints, Murmurings and Uneasiness, as if our legal Fence was all broke down, when yet we dare *Challenge all the Disturbers of our Peace to Instance in any one Breach of Law to justify their Conduct*. What Wrongs have any receiv'd, what Property have they lost, what Branch of Liberty have they been deny'd, which the Law, Custom or Constitution of our Country allows 'em?

This therefore is a most unusual Strain of Baseness to be Full, and Spurn

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at God for his very Mercies, and sacrifice to the Furies of Anger, Pride, Rage, and Ambition, those very Offerings which God intended for the Altar of Joy, of Peace and Thanksgiving.

But we may correct this Temper by attending to the Fourth and last Thing I propos'd to speak to, which was to shew,

Fourthly, The Obligation which lies on the Conscience to obey the Magistrate; *We must needs be subject, not only for Wrath, but also for Conscience sake.*

Here we find Obedience to the Magistrate due, as well upon a Spiritual as Temporal account. This Minister of God must be observ'd, *not only for Wrath*, for the avoiding only some Temporal Evil, *but also for Conscience sake*, out of Duty to that supream Sovereign who has plac'd him over us.

And here it is very remarkable, that the Person in whose Favour the Apostle pleads, had no Right of Inheritance at all to the Imperial Diadem; that he ascended the Throne by the foulest Steps of Injustice and Cruelty, and had no better Title than the Consent of the Senate; yet without regard to these Circumstances, St. Paul strictly enjoins Obedience to him under

der the severe Penalty of eternal Damnation, *Rom. xiii. 2.*

Now certainly if it was damnable to resist one of his infamous Character, only because he was invested with the Supreme and Sovereign Power, it can't be thought less Criminal to rebel against our Government, in which are most undoubtedly vested the very same Powers which the Apostle so strictly enjoyns to have always preserv'd sacred and inviolate.

I can't therefore be too earnest in pressing you in the most solemn manner, to avoid this Fate, by paying a most sincere and inviolable Allegiance to the best of Princes, our most excellent Sovereign King *GEORGE*, as you value not only the Temporal Interests of this Life, but your eternal Salvation in the next.

You may perhaps hope to shroud your Disloyalty and Falshood under the Cloak of Popularity, and vainly flatter your selves with impunity, from the Numbers of an unthinking Crowd, which have had the Misfortune to appear on the side of Rebellion ; but remember likewise, that *we must not follow a Multitude to do Evil* ; no Legions, no Confederacies are able to change the Nature of Things, to alter the native Deformity of Treason and Ingratitude,

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gratitude, or skreen us from the fierce Resentments of an incensed God for our Publick and National Impieties. *Though Hand join in Hand*, let their Strength seem never so firm, compact, and united, *the Wicked shall not go unpunish'd*: Were Numbers able to out-brave the Divine Justice, all Sin might then hope for Impunity from its numerous Professors. Sin in general we know has the Multitude on its side, but it will not protect any from Guilt and Punishment on that Score, since the Way to Safety is the *strait Road*, that unbeaten Path which few frequent; which is the only *sure Passage to Eternal Life*.

Nor are the other Pretences for withholding Allegiance less vain and trifling than that of Popularity. The empty Noise of the *Danger of the Church* is that foolish Bait which still deludes and catches too many of the unwary Populace. One would think it were Time now to *change this Note*, since after so long a Cry of the *Danger of the Church*, with which they have tortur'd the Ears and Understanding of the Nation; the Church still remains whole and untouch'd in her Doctrine and Discipline, in her Articles, Rubrick, and Canons, without suffering the least Violence

lence on any part of her Constitution; yet in Defiance of our very Senses, the Cry must last, and the poor unhappy People patiently bear to be impos'd upon, tho the Snare is openly laid, and the Net spread by Popish Priests and Jesuits, and all the wretched Spawn of Antichristian Rome, in conjunction with some deluded Zealots of the Reformation, but declar'd Enemies to our happy Constitution, on purpose to enslave and ruin us.

I cannot even on my part deny, but that our Church is in great Danger in one Sense, and that a very dismal and melancholy one; what I mean is, from our selves; the unnatural Heats and Divisions of our own Members, our violent Passions and contempt of Oaths, that most sacred Tye and Obligation of Conscience, which we have reason to fear may provoke God and Man to forsake us, and let in a Flood of Atheism and Infidelity upon us.

I can't too often Remark upon this Occasion, whilst we are viewing the State of the Church with respect to Government, that none are more busy in proclaiming its Danger than the very Papists themselves, who most of all hate it, and would be glad to see it in *real Danger*.

And

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And is not this alone enough to open our Eyes, and make us suspect some secret Mischief from the Common Enemy, that they set up for Guardians of our Church who are oblig'd by Principle, and upon pain of Damnation, to do all they can to destroy our Religion; which they opprobriously call the *Northern Heresy*; which is in the most solemn manner every Year Curs'd by the Pope, and the Professors of it Excommunicated by him, and as far as his Antichristian Majesty is able, all sent to the Devil.

Yet this is that famous Guardian and Protector of our Holy Faith, which the Seditious amongst us, and insolent Rioters are for introducing with his Pupil the Pretender.

And which is still more strange, even in the midst of this insolent and black Attempt, have these very Incendiaries the Assurance to challenge the First Rank in the List of Churchmen to themselves, bringing thereby the greatest Reproach on our Profession, in making Riot and Sedition, Tumult and Rebellion, Lying and Perjury, (those Infernal Marks of an Apostate Fiend) the best Tokens and Characters of a True Son of the Church, of a Church that inspires nothing but Peace and Love. The

The Time will most certainly come, when Men will have very different Sentiments of this part of their Conduct, and when the present Frenzy is abated, and the Froth of their Pride, and Passion, and Rage is work'd off, they will then clearly discern their Error; and this perhaps at a time too, when they may be oppress'd with Doubts and Scruples of their Acceptance with God, for their having so long obstinately rejected the first and Cardinal Points of Religion, those of Love and Peace, of Submission and Allegiance.

There is one Difficulty still remaining in the way of publick Peace and Allegiance, which I shall endeavour to remove, and so conclude; and that is, the Pain and Shame of retracting some former Opinions. When Men have embrac'd a particular Set of Notions, warmly espous'd them in Conversation, and express'd an usual Heat and Eagerness in their Defence, they think themselves oblig'd to adhere to these Doctrines, and are asham'd to abandon their once favourite Opinions. And these false Notions, I fear, have hardned too many, who would be glad perhaps to retreat, if they could go off with Honour.

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But sure being convinc'd, which is only yielding to Reason, and shewing a strength and clearness of Judgment, need not excite Shame and Concern in any. There is no Reproach like Obstinacy in Error. This indeed looks like invincible Folly, an unconquerable Stupidity, which no Argument can soften; whilst the acknowledgment of a Mistake does not only discover the Meekness and Humility of the Christian, but shews likewise the Capacity of the Mind and Understanding, that we are not to be always kept in Delusion, or carried away by mere Shew and Pretence; that we are not captivated and enslav'd to vulgar Opinions, but that our own Reason and Experience is our Guide, and that we gladly shake off the Vizard of Ignorance or Mistake, as soon as ever the Light of Truth darts its Beams abroad. To be mistaken is no Reflection at all, Error being one of the unavoidable Infirmities of Human Nature; but to persist in Error against the plainest Evidences of Truth, of Fact and Experience, is a manifest Proof either of a Natural or Moral Incapacity; that our Organs and Capacities are very dull and heavy, or that we lie under some judicial Blindness, some Plague from God for our Sins and Disobedience.

I shall now conclude all with this earnest Supplication: That God would please to heal all our unhappy Differences, and unite our Hearts in a firm, lasting, and faithful Allegiance to our most excellent Sovereign King *G E O R G E*, and to one another with a constant and unfeigned Love: That for the sake of these poor distracted Nations, he would skreen his sacred Majesty with the Eye of his watchful Providence, and *let no Design formed against him ever Prosper.* That he would grant him a long and prosperous Reign, and give us all Minds grateful enough to deserve that Blessing. And after a long and chearful Triumph over the Hearts of a grateful and happy People, may his Crown, with all his Virtues, quietly descend to the Protestant Branches of his Royal House, and rest therein unmov'd so long as the Sun and Moon endureth.

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